

UNTAMED LOVE

JANUARY

10¢

QUALITY
ROMANCE
PUBLICATION

I.C.D.
1

Bonnie Gregory

OH, ROGER, HOW CAN I SHOW
YOU THAT THIS IS JUST A
PASSING INFATUATION...
HOW CAN I EVER HOPE TO
WIN YOU BACK FROM SUCH
A RAVISHING CREATURE?





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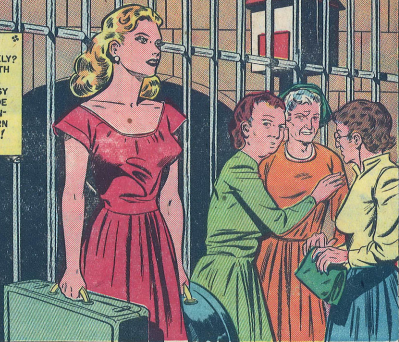
ON SALE EVERYWHERE

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They Called Me Shameless

IT'S THAT DONNA RAINES I TOLD YOU ABOUT! SHE'S ABSOLUTELY SHAMELESS!

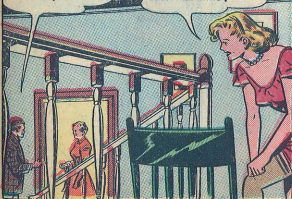
IS IT A SIN TO LOVE COMPLETELY? ARE THE RULES OF SOCIETY WORTH A BROKEN HEART? I REFUSED TO THINK SO—AND WHEN MY ECSTASY TURNED TO BLACK DESPAIR, I MADE MY OWN RULES—DEFYING CONVENTION AND THE WHISPERS OF SCORN TO FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO LOVE!



Only a girl completely head-over-heart in love can know the happiness that was mine only a few short weeks ago...

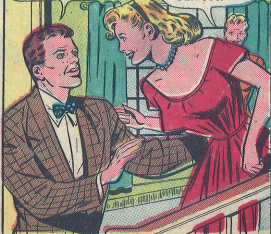
HI, MOM-TO-BE! ISN'T THAT BRAT READY YET? SHE NEEDS A GOOD HOT-FOOT TO STIR HER UP!

I HEARD THAT CRACK, RICK HUDSON! JUST WAIT TILL I GET YOU ON A NICE HIGH DOCK SOME DAY! YOU'LL RUE SUCH REMARKS!



DON'T GET TOUGH WITH ME, BABY, OR I'LL TIE KNOTS IN YOUR WEDDING VEIL!

OH, YOU KIDS AND YOUR CRAZY TALK! RUN ALONG BEFORE I THINK YOU'RE SERIOUS!

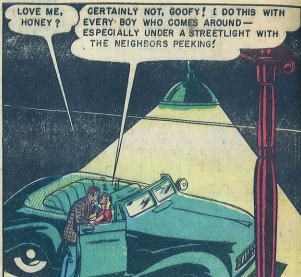


UNTAMED LOVE



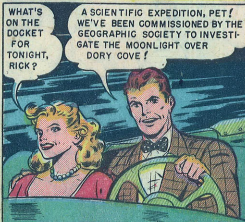
I CAN HANDLE THIS OX ANY DAY! I BLACKJACKED HIM INTO PROPOSING, DIDN'T I? 'NIGHT, MOM!

DON'T WAIT UP FOR HER, MOM! WE'VE GOT THINGS TO GO AND PLACES TO DO TONIGHT!



LOVE ME, HONEY?

CERTAINLY NOT, GOOFY! I DO THIS WITH EVERY BOY WHO COMES AROUND—ESPECIALLY UNDER A STREETLIGHT WITH THE NEIGHBORS PEEKING!



WHAT'S ON THE DOCKET FOR TONIGHT, RICK?

A SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION, PET! WE'VE BEEN COMMISSIONED BY THE GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY TO INVESTIGATE THE MOONLIGHT OVER DORY COVE!

This was our favorite spot! It was here Rick proposed to me---and here we came to plan our future!

SO THAT'S THE DEAL, HONEY! ONE MORE MONTH AND I'LL BE IN BUSINESS FOR MYSELF! I GUESS THAT CINCHES OUR WEDDING DATE!

OH, RICK, THAT'S WONDERFUL! WE CAN SEND OUT THE ANNOUNCEMENTS THIS WEEK!



DEAREST, I'M THE ABSOLUTELY HAPPIEST PERSON IN THE WORLD!

HUH-UH! I'M THE HAPPIEST! BUT IF YOU'RE GOOD, I'LL LET YOU BE THE NEXT-TO-HAPPIEST! COAX ME, HONEY!



OKAY! HOW'S THIS?



YOU LOSE! NOW I'M HAPPIER THAN EVER—IF THAT'S POSSIBLE!

SILLY! WE'D BETTER BE GETTING HOME! SLEEP MAKES THE WAITING TIME GO FASTER!

As we drove up, my house was dark and quiet—but the Conrads' next door was jumping with noise and music!

HEY! WHAT GIVES AT CONRAD'S?

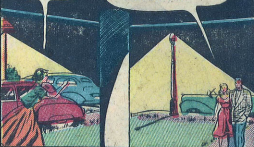
YOU'VE GOT ME! MUST BE A SURPRISE PARTY FOR FREDA! SHE DIDN'T PLAN ANYTHING, I'M SURE! I TALKED TO HER THIS EVENING!



Suddenly someone called our names! If I had even guessed then what would grow out of that innocent call...

OH, DONNA--RICK! I'VE BEEN WATCHING FOR YOU TWO ALL EVENING!

IT'S FREDA CONRAD! WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE, FREDA--A BOILERMAKERS' CONVENTION?



IT'S MY COUSIN MARDI FROM NEW YORK! SHE BLEW IN FOR A SURPRISE VISIT SO I ROUNDED UP A WELCOME PARTY! YOU *MUST* COME!

CAN'T WE TAKE A RAIN CHECK, FREDA? TOMORROW'S A WORK DAY FOR ME...

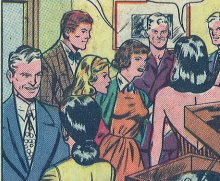
OH, DON'T BE A STICK-IN-THE-MUD, RICK HUDSON! COME IN AND MEET HER, ANYHOW! SHE'S WONDERFUL--SO SOPHISTICATED!

YOU WIN, FREDA! I ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE THIS GORGEOUS CREATURE YOU'VE BRAGGED ABOUT SO MUCH!

Not even a stab of warning touched my heart as Freda ran up to a strange girl in a daring evening gown!

MARDI, HERE THEY ARE! I JUST CAUGHT RICK AND DONNA! YOU MUST MEET THEM!

THE LOVE BIRDS? INDEED I MUST...



Coming face to face with Mardi Conrad was like a physical impact!

SO YOU'RE THE GIRL WHO'S POLISHING WEDDING BELLS! SOUNDS BORING, BUT CONGRATULATIONS, IF THAT'S WHAT *YOU* WANT!

IT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WANT, MARDI! AND I FIND IT ANYTHING BUT DULL!



AND THIS IS RICK HUDSON, MARDI CONRAD!

HMMM! I SEE WHAT DONNA MEANS! FREDA, I'VE CHANGED MY MIND ABOUT DRIVING BACK TOMORROW! I THINK I'LL VISIT YOU FOR A WHILE!



UNTAMED LOVE

I stood there, helpless, watching it happen, feeling the icy fingers of fear take hold of my heart!

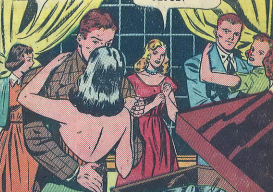
GOSH, MARDI! I-I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY! YOU STUN ME!

THEN IF YOU CAN'T USE YOUR TONGUE, RICK, USE YOUR ARMS AND FEET! I WANT TO DANCE WITH YOU!



YOU--YOU MUSTN'T MIND, DONNA! MARDI'S JUST IMPULSIVE!

HMM! IMPULSIVE WASN'T QUITE THE WORD I HAD IN MIND, FREDA--BUT IT'S CLOSE!



Hurt and shamed, I could only sit helplessly by and watch Rick drawn deeper and deeper into Mord's net!

I SIMPLY HAD NO IDEA THERE WAS ANYONE LIKE YOU IN THIS DULL TOWN OR I'D HAVE BEEN OUT HERE AGES AGO!

IF I'D KNOWN THERE WAS SOMEONE LIKE YOU IN NEW YORK, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN HERE, MARDI!



Poor, bumbling, frightened Freda did the best she could to stop the inevitable!

PLEASE...WE SIMPLY MUST BREAK THIS UP! IT'S LATE AND WE'RE KEEPING MOTHER AND DAD AWAKE! I'M AWFULLY SORRY...

LATE? WHY DARLING, IT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YORK EVENING! HOW QUAIN!



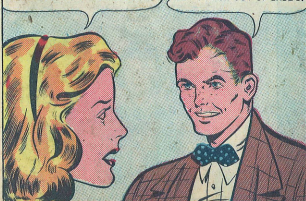
I HAVE A SIMPLY PRICELESS IDEA! ISN'T THERE A NIGHT CLUB OF ANY KIND WE COULD GO TO AROUND HERE?

WELL, THERE'S BABE'S ROAD-HOUSE OUT ON ROUTE 66! IT'S KIND OF A DIVE, BUT...



COUNT ME OUT! THIS LITTLE WALLFLOWER IS GOING HOME TO BLOOM IN HER BED! DO I HAVE AN ESCORT TO MY DOOR?

AW, OF COURSE YOU DO, HONEY! BUT I WISH YOU'D GET INTO THE FUN! YOU'D GET A KICK OUT OF BABE'S!



I didn't bother saying good-night to Mard! I didn't trust my fingernails that close to her baby face!

I'LL BET IT WOULD BE HILARIOUS, WATCHING YOU AND THE VAMPIRE WRESTLE FOR THE NITWIT CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE WORLD!

HONEY, WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU? YOU ACT SO FUNNY, ALL OF A SUDDEN! ARE YOU JEALOUS, DONNA?

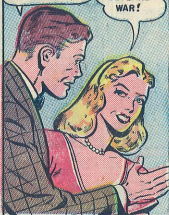


WHAT A STRANGE IDEA! A GIRL JUST **LOVES** HAVING HER WEDDING DREAMS INTERRUPTED BY THE SPECTACLE OF HER FIANCEE PANTING AFTER SOMEONE ELSE!



GOSH, I'M SORRY, KITTEN! I GUESS I—I DID MAKE KIND OF A SAP OF MYSELF! BUT THAT GAL SORT OF SWAMPED ME!

BUT I LOVE **YOU**, DONNA, AND NOTHING ELSE MATTERS! WE'LL GO DATE UP THE PREACHER TOMORROW NIGHT AFTER WORK! OKAY?



OKAY, YOU BIG LUG! BUT DON'T FALL INTO ANY MORE MAN-TRAPS OR I MIGHT DECLARE WAR!

What a fool I was! The fire of Rick's lips burned away my fears and the pressure of his arms crushed my doubts!



DEAREST!

OH, MY DARLING!

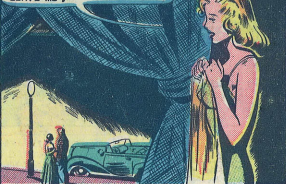
I didn't turn on my light upstairs! Moonlight and memories were brighter than any man-made brilliance!

MY LOVE WILL LEAVE ME NEVER! TOMORROW IS FOREVER...! ♪



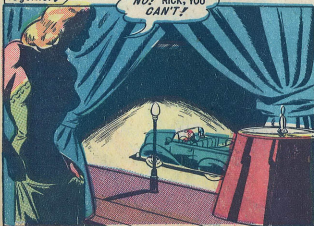
And then I happened to glance out the window...

RICK AND MARDI! OH, **NO!** SHE MUST HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR HIM TO LEAVE ME!



And then, while I stared in disbelief, they drove off—
together!

NO! RICK, YOU CAN'T!



Rick's car turned at the corner—toward Route 66—and Babe's Roadhouse!

SOB! OH, RICK, RICK—HOW **COULD** YOU? EVERYTHING WAS SO WONDERFUL ONLY A FEW SHORT HOURS AGO!



It was down before I fell asleep—and they still hadn't come back! Freda rushed over, all upset!

OH, DONNA, WHAT HAVE I DONE TO YOU? I—I TRIED TO TALK TO HER AND SHE JUST LAUGHED AT ME! IT'S ALL MY FAULT!

STOP BEING SO TRAGIC, FREDA! IF MEN HAD ANY WILL POWER, MOST OF US WOULD NEVER GET HUSBANDS!



I went through my day at the library where I worked with a heavy heart! I thought Rick would phone but he didn't!

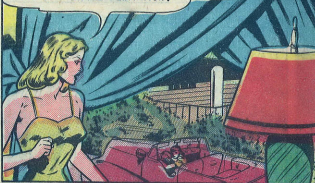
THAT WILL BE A SIX CENTS OVERDUE FINE, MRS. HENLY!

HERE YOU ARE! AND PUT ME DOWN ON THE LIST FOR THAT NEW BOOK, "NEVER TRUST A MAN"! THE TITLE INTRIGUES ME, DEAR!



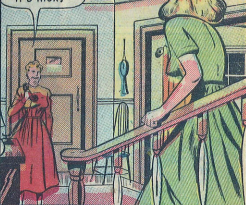
I tried to pretend nothing was changed! But that night, as I dressed for the date with Rick...

THERE SHE GOES IN HER OWN CAR! I WONDER...! BUT RICK *WOULDN'T*! I'M MAKING TOO MUCH OF A LITTLE FLIRTATION!



But half an hour later...

TELEPHONE, DONNA! IT'S RICK!



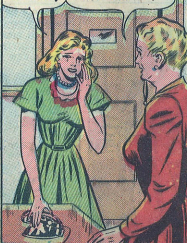
Even before I took the phone I knew what I would hear!

NO, THAT'S ALL RIGHT, RICK! WE CAN POSTPONE OUR DATE IF YOU HAVE SO MUCH WORK! OF COURSE I UNDERSTAND!



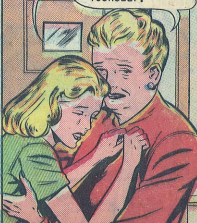
OH, MOM, MOM—SOMETHING TERRIBLE IS HAPPENING!

I'M AFRAID I KNOW, DEAR! I WAS AWAKE LAST NIGHT—AND I MET MARDI WHEN SHE FIRST ARRIVED!



I LOVE RICK SO! OH, WHAT CAN I DO? HOW CAN I STOP THIS?

THAT'S THE OLDEST UNANSWERED QUESTION IN THE WORLD, DONNA! NO ONE CAN TELL YOU WHAT TO DO! YOU'LL HAVE TO DECIDE FOR YOURSELF!



When I got home the next evening...

RICK PHONED A WHILE AGO, DONNA! HE SAYS HE'LL BE TIED UP AGAIN TONIGHT!

I KNOW! I—I EXPECTED IT!



Upstairs I took off Rick's diamond! I could slip it off my finger but I couldn't tear it out of my heart!

OH, RICK, HOW COULD YOU BE SO CRUEL? I HATE THAT GIRL! I HATE HER—HATE HER—HATE HER!



The next night he didn't even bother to phone! By then all the town busy-bodies were having a Roman Holiday with my life!

YOU POOR, POOR DARLING! SIMPLY *EVERYONE* IS TALKING ABOUT YOUR BROKEN HEART! YOU'RE TAKING IT *SO* BRAVELY!

THANK YOU! IT'S SO SWEET OF EVERYONE TO MIND MY BUSINESS FOR ME! I'LL LET YOU ALL KNOW IF THERE ARE ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS!



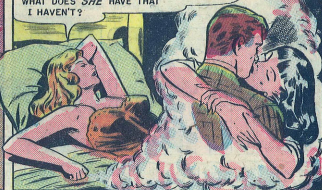
WHY...! DO YOU SUPPOSE SHE WAS TRYING TO BE NASTY?

HMMPH! I SHAN'T WASTE ANY MORE SYMPATHY ON *HER*! WITH A DISPOSITION LIKE THAT, NO WONDER SHE CAN'T HOLD A MAN!



By day I could pretend indifference, but the lonely nights were filled with the poison of my anguished imagination!

WHY, RICK? *WHY*? WHERE DID I FAIL YOU? WHAT DOES *SHE* HAVE THAT I HAVEN'T?



AND THEN, ONE DAY...

OH, DONNA, DONNA, SHE'S GONE BACK TO NEW YORK! SHE LEFT THIS MORNING!

SO WHAT, FREDA? DON'T EXPECT ME TO JOIN IN YOUR GRIEF!



B-BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! RICK W-WENT WITH HER! HE'S G-GOING TO G-GET A JOB IN NEW YORK TO BE NEAR H-HER!

OH-H-H...!



UNTAMED LOVE

My heart dropped to the depths of despair! Now Rick was gone and my last, faint, lingering hope had gone with him! But had it...?

OH, DONNA, NOW THERE'S NOTHING ANYONE CAN DO!

NO...! WAIT! MAYBE THERE IS!

WH-WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, DONNA?

DO? IF RICK WAS WORTH CRYING OVER, HE'S WORTH FIGHTING FOR! MOM SAID I HAD TO DECIDE THAT QUESTION FOR MYSELF, AND I'VE DECIDED, FREDA...

I'M GOING TO FIGHT FOR RICK'S LOVE! TELL ME—WOULD MARDI MARRY A SMALL-TOWN NOBODY LIKE RICK?

OH, HEAVENS NO! SHE SAYS SHE'D NEVER MARRY ANYBODY BUT A MILLIONAIRE! ALL SHE WANTS IS FUN AND EXCITEMENT AND NEW CONQUESTS!

I knew one thing—I had the finest, sweetest, most understanding mother in the world!

IF YOU CAN STAND THE WHISPERS, DONNA—GO AHEAD! I'M FOR YOU! AND I'M FOR RICK, TOO, WHEN HE COMES OUT OF THIS MAD SPELL!

BLESS YOU, MOM! I KNOW I'LL WIN, NOW! I KNOW THINGS ABOUT RICK THAT MARDI HASN'T DISCOVERED YET!

THERE'S THAT SHAMELESS RAINES GIRL! IMAGINE, SHE'S ACTUALLY CHASING THE MAN WHO JILTED HER! I'D NEVER CHASE A MAN!

OR VICE VERSA, MISS PRIMM!

The busybodies would have been more shocked if they could have seen me check into the hotel in New York—the one I had learned Rick was staying at!

I BOUGHT A ONE-WAY TICKET! IF THIS DOESN'T WORK, I NEVER WANT TO GO HOME! I COULDN'T STAND IT THERE WITHOUT RICK!

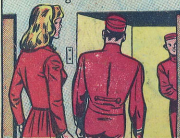
That night I waited in the lobby, knowing that sooner or later I would see Mardi coming for Rick! At last...

THERE SHE GOES, TO CALL HIM FROM THE DESK! I WONDER IF I'M A FOOL TO THINK I CAN DESTROY THE SPELL OF HER GLAMOR!

Mardi used the house telephone, then took a chair to wait for Rick to come down! Everything was working my way...

I UNDERSTAND, MA'AM! I'LL DO JUST WHAT YOU SAID!

FINE! I'M DEPENDING ON YOU!



I waited, trembling, until I saw the elevator go up to Rick's floor! Then I walked across to Mardi!

HELLO, MARDI! WAITING FOR RICK?

Y-YOU! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? DID YOU COME TO MAKE A SCENE?



A SCENE? OF COURSE NOT! I STOPPED TO GIVE YOU YOUR ENGAGEMENT RING, MY DEAR! RICK FORGOT TO PICK IT UP WHEN HE LEFT!

ENGAGEMENT RING? THAT THING?



From a corner of my eye I saw Rick appear and start toward us! Then the bellboy intercepted him with my note...

OF COURSE, MARDI! I KNOW RICK IS TOO FINE AND HONORABLE TO GO ON WITHOUT GIVING YOU AN ENGAGEMENT RING AND HE CAN'T AFFORD TO BUY ANOTHER!

THIS IS THE SILLIEST THING I EVER HEARD OF!



THAT LITTLE SLIVER OF GLASS? HA-HA-HA! WHY, MY DEAR, I GET BIGGER RINGS THAN THAT FROM MEN I HARDLY KNOW! THIS IS A LAUGH!

BUT RICK CAN'T AFFORD A BIG RING, MARDI! WE BOTH SAVED TO BUY THIS ONE—BUT IT'S ALL PAID FOR!



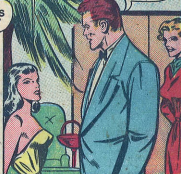
IN THE FIRST PLACE, I WOULDN'T MARRY THAT YOKEL! I KEEP HIM STRICTLY FOR LAUGHS! AND IN THE SECOND PLACE...

NEVER MIND THE SECOND PLACE, MARDI! I THINK YOUR FIRST POINT COVERED THINGS PRETTY WELL!



RICK! YOU...

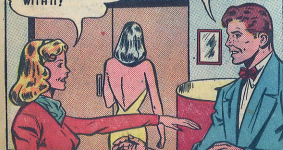
THANKS FOR THE JOLT, MARDI! WHEN A MAN'S A COMPLETE FOOL, IT TAKES BITTER MEDICINE TO CURE HIM! BUT I THINK I'M CURED NOW!



Mardi read the cold anger of awakening in Rick's eyes and fled!

IF YOU'RE THROUGH WITH MY RING, RICK, HOW ABOUT REPLACING IT—BEFORE IT GETS LOST AGAIN! TOMORROW YOU CAN GET THE ONE TO GO WITH IT!

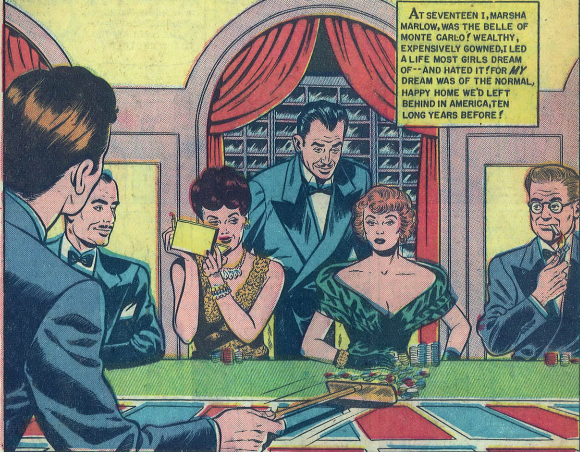
DONNA! YOU-YOU MEAN AFTER ALL I'VE DONE TO HURT YOU, YOU'D STILL MARRY ME? OH, MY DEAREST...!



As Rick took me into his arms, I met the eye of the grinning bellboy who had helped me by stopping Rick with my faked note... in just the right place to overhear Mardi's harsh words!



Homeless Heart



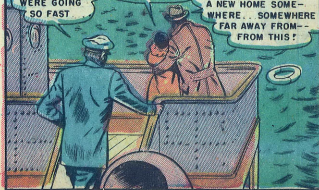
AT SEVENTEEN I, MARSHA MARLOW, WAS THE BELLE OF MONTE CARLO! WEALTHY, EXPENSIVELY GOWNED, I LED A LIFE MOST GIRLS DREAM OF--AND HATED IT! FOR MY DREAM WAS OF THE NORMAL, HAPPY HOME WE'D LEFT BEHIND IN AMERICA, TEN LONG YEARS BEFORE!

That trip to Europe was to be a second honeymoon for Mother and Dad! And then... a slippery deck... a faint cry... and we were left alone!

I... I'M AFRAID IT'S NO USE, MR MARLOW! WE WERE GOING SO FAST.

WHERE'S MY MOMMY? I WANT MY MOMMY!

THERE'S-- THERE'S JUST THE TWO OF US NOW, BABY! WE'LL MAKE A NEW HOME SOMEWHERE... SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY FROM-- FROM THIS!



And so we stayed abroad! Dad buried himself in work, and though he sent for worldly, brittle Aunt Leila, she couldn't take Mother's place...

MARSHA, PET, PLEASE DON'T ACT SO BORED! AND BE NICE TO COUNT D'ORZINI--HE'S A WONDERFUL CATCH!

I KNOW YOU THINK I'M SILLY, AUNT LEILA, BUT I JUST DON'T LIKE THIS LIFE! AND I DON'T LIKE THAT OIL COUNT, EITHER!



And then one night Dad, for the first time since we'd arrived, came into the Casino! Or maybe "stormed" is a better description!

I WANT TO TALK TO YOU TWO IMMEDIATELY--IN PRIVATE! AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING AT A GAMBLING TABLE, MARSHA? YOU'RE MUCH TOO YOUNG!

MARSHA'S NOT A CHILD ANY MORE, ROGER! AND WHAT ON EARTH BLASTED YOU OUT OF THAT OFFICE TO PLAY STERN PARENT?



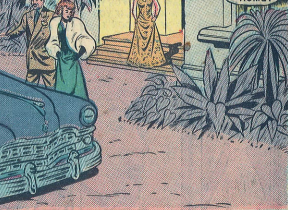
THIS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER, LEILA! THAT NO-GOOD COUNT D'ORZINI'S FAMILY JUST CALLED TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE SIZE OF MARSHA'S DOWRY!

REALLY? HOW MARVELOUS! I'D NO IDEA THEY WERE CONSIDERING THE MATCH THAT SERIOUSLY!



BUT I THOUGHT --YOUR AUNT SAID YOU WANTED TO STAY!

WHY, I'VE NEVER BEEN HAPPY HERE, DAD! OH, GOLLY...JUST THINK, THIS IS THE LAST TIME I'LL SEE THAT POKY OLD CASINO! WE'RE GOING HOME!



THEY WERE CONSIDERING-- WHY, I WOULDN'T LET HER MARRY THAT FORTUNE-HUNTING PUP FOR-- MARSHA, WE'RE GOING BACK TO AMERICA! TO-MORROW!

A- AMERICA? HOME? OH, DADDY, HOW WONDERFUL! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!



Only then we learned that Aunt Leila, to secure my "future", had hidden from each of us the other's home-sickness!

HOW COULD AUNT LEILA EVER THINK I'D LEARN TO PREFER A MOTH-EATEN TITLE TO... TO THIS?

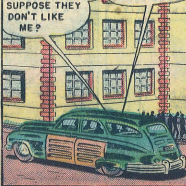
PEOPLE ARE FUNNY, BABY! BUT YOU ALREADY HAVE THE BEST TITLE IN THE WORLD -- "CITIZEN, U.S.A.!" I ONLY WISH WE'D NEVER LEFT!



I echoed that wish of Dad's, in spite of my happiness, when we reached Maplewood and our new home! It was all so strange!

I-I GUESS THAT WILL BE MY HIGH SCHOOL, DAD! BUT THEY ALL LOOK SO YOUNG! THEY EVEN DRESS DIFFERENTLY... SUPPOSE THEY DON'T LIKE ME?

OF COURSE THEY'LL LIKE YOU, BABY! WEREN'T YOU THE MOST POPULAR GIRL ON THE WHOLE RIVIERA?



Perhaps Dad, too, had been away too long! My fellow students *didn't* like me--not because they were different, but because I was!

I-I BEG-- RESTAURANT? YOUR PARDON, I'M AFRAID OUR BUT COULD YOU CAFETERIA DIRECT ME TO WOULD BE JUST TOO COMMON, MISS MARLOW-- BETTER PACK A FEW TINS OF CAVIAR IN YOUR LUNCH BOX!



It was like a nightmare! Everything I said and did and wore seemed to be wrong! After a word or two, even the boys shied away!



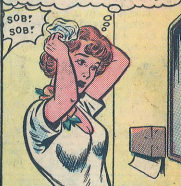
H-HI, MARSHA! LIKE TO LATCH ONTO A COKE?

A... A COKE? A LATCH? I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN!

AW, COME ON, TED! YOU'RE NOT THE CONTINENTAL TYPE, BOY!

For ten years, I'd dreamed of graduating from a real American high school! But when the day came, it brought only a dull relief!

I DON'T KNOW WHY I BOTHERED TO DRESS UP! THEY'LL ONLY THINK I'M SHOWING OFF! BUT IF I DIDN'T, THEY'D SAY I WAS SNOBBISH!



SOB!
SOB!

SOB--OH--I DIDN'T KNOW TH--THERE WAS ANYONE IN HERE, MARSHA!

IF... IF YOU'RE CRYING ABOUT THAT RIP IN YOUR DRESS, SALLY, I CAN FIX IT FOR YOU IN A MINUTE, IF YOU IF YOU DON'T MIND!



WH-WHAT? OH, THANKS, BUT IT WOULD TAKE AN EXPERT SEAMSTRESS--

THAT'S ONE OF THE FEW THINGS MY EUROPEAN SCHOOLING TAUGHT ME! AND THEY ALSO TAUGHT ME TO CARRY A SEWING KIT! HOLD STILL NOW!



A torn dress... a smiling face... suddenly, I poured out my heart...

WHY, YOU CAN'T EVEN TELL IT WAS TORN! MARSHA, I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY! WE ALL DO! YOU'RE A SWELL GIRL!

OH, SALLY! NOW IT'S MY TURN TO CRY! I LOOKED FORWARD TO COMING HOME SO LONG... AND I WANTED YOU ALL TO LIKE ME... AND NOW IT'S OVER AND... I'M SO LONELY!



Sally broke all the carefully rehearsed marching rules to walk on the stage beside me that night! I had made a friend!



YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR PLACE IN LINE, SALLY! WHAT WILL MISS HAWKS SAY?

WHAT DO WE CARE? WE ARE GRADUATES! AND ANYWAY, MARSHA, I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU BE LONELY AGAIN!

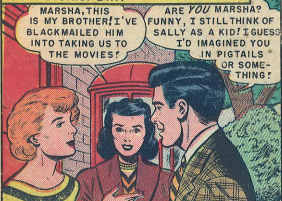
Sally kept that vow! And because she was the most popular girl in town, the others followed her lead...

HEY, MARSHA! WANT TO GO FOR A SWIM?

WHY, I'D LOVE TO! THANKS! AND THANK YOU, SALLY!



But even Sally didn't know what a friend she was being when she introduced me to her brother Bill!



MARSHA, THIS IS MY BROTHER! I'VE BLACKMAILED HIM INTO TAKING US TO THE MOVIES!

ARE YOU MARSHA? FUNNY, I STILL THINK OF SALLY AS A KID! I GUESS I'D IMAGINED YOU IN PIGTAILS OR SOMETHING!

I don't remember a thing about the movie, just that Bill was beside me! Toward the end he held my hand, and as we walked out...

I CAN TAKE A HINT! NOT THAT YOU'LL HEAR ME, BUT GOOD NIGHT, MARSHA! NICE PIGTAILS, HUH, BROTHER DEAR?

AND WE COULD HAVE A PICNIC TOMORROW AT FORT YOUNG, AND SATURDAY... OH-UH; DO YOU HAVE TO GO, SIS? BYE!

MARSHA, LET'S...

I'd read about people being made for each other, and laughed! But that was before I met Bill...

GEE, DARLING, IT'S AFTERNOON, AND I PROMISED YOUR DAD I'D GET YOU HOME FOR LUNCH! TIME GOES SO FAST WITH YOU!

FUNNY, BUT--YOU KNOW, WHEN I'M WITH YOU I FEEL AS THOUGH I AM AT HOME!



I'd honestly been thinking of Bill's best interests when I said that! But he didn't understand! All my old reputation as a snob ensured that!

JUST LIKE THAT, HUH? MISS MARLOW WON'T CONSIDER A MECHANIC!



The summer flew past as quickly as a comet! Then one night...

DARLING, EVERY TIME I LEAVE YOU, I... MARSHA, LET'S NOT EVER LEAVE EACH OTHER! WILL YOU MARRY ME?

BILL, SWEETHEART, OF COURSE! SALLY'S BEEN TRYING ON BRIDESMAID'S DRESSES FOR A MONTH NOW!



BILL! YOU'RE BEING RIDICULOUS --I ONLY SAID --BILL! WAIT!

WHAT'S WRONG, MARSHA? WHAT'S HAPPENED?



OH, DADDY, HE'S GONE! HE... HE... THINKS I'M A SNOB! HE DIDN'T GIVE ME A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN! I-I D-DON'T EVER WANT TO SEE HIM AGAIN!

BRIDESMAIDS? GEE, LET'S NOT GET IT TOO FANCY, BABY! YOU MIGHT JUST AS WELL GET INTO THE HABIT OF LIVING ON A MECHANIC'S WAGES NOW...

A--A MECHANIC? BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN COLLEGE, BILL! IF YOU HAVE TO GIVE UP YOUR EDUCATION TO SUPPORT ME, WE'LL WAIT!



But as the long, lonely weeks passed, I knew that I *did* want to see Bill--more than anything in the world! And Sally knew it, too!

YOU TWO MAKE ME SICK! BILL MOPING AT HOME AND YOU HERE... MARSHA, ARE YOU JUST GOING TO TAKE IT? AREN'T YOU GOING TO DO ANYTHING?

WHAT IS THERE TO DO, SALLY? IF BILL CAN STILL FEEL I'M SELFISH AND SNOBBISH, AFTER... OH, THERE'S NO USE TALKING ABOUT IT!

HE *DOESN'T* THINK IT REALLY! IT'S JUST THAT, WELL, TIMES ARE TOUGH FOR US! THAT'S WHY BILL'S QUIT COLLEGE! AND YOU *AREN'T* USED TO A TIGHT BUDGET!

MAYBE NOT, BUT I COULD CERTAINLY GET USED TO IT! ONLY I HAVE TO PROVE IT TO BILL--AND I THINK I KNOW HOW!

After a quick change to my plainest dress, I left Sally and drove to a cheap restaurant near where Bill worked! This was my chance... if only they'd let me have it!

I... I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO THE PROPRIETOR, PLEASE! ABOUT A... A JOB?

THAT'S THE BOSS OVER THERE, KID! DON'T CALL HIM THAT LONG NAME, THOUGH! HE'D THINK YOU WERE INSULTING HIM!

COULD... COULD YOU USE A WAITRESS HERE? I'LL WORK HARD, MR...

JOE'S THE NAME! WE AIN'T FANCY AROUND HERE! AND WE DON'T HIRE INEXPERIENCED KIDS!

SHE KNOWS THE ROPES, JOE! USED TO WORK WITH ME OVER AT EDDIE'S! I MEANT TO TELL YOU SHE WAS COMING IN!

YEAH? SHE LOOKS KIND OF GLASSY, BUT IF YOU SAY SHE IS OKAY, ELLA?

I'LL DO A GOOD JOB! REALLY! THANKS! AND THANK YOU... ELLA!

The first part of my plan was a success! Or at least it was if I could keep Ella thinking I'd worked with her once...

THIS--THIS UNIFORM FITS JUST AS WELL AS BEFORE, AND I KNOW IT! BUT THE ONE I WORE AT... AT EDDIE'S, DOESN'T IT, ELLA?

RELAX, KID! I NEVER SAW YOU BEFORE, AND I KNOW IT! BUT JOE DOESN'T AND YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU WANTED THE JOB AWFUL BAD!

Strange, how you make friends in a minute, or not at all! I told Ella the whole story, and what I planned to do about it...

... AND SO I THOUGHT IF BILL CAME IN HERE AND SAW ME WORKING, HE'D REALIZE I WASN'T A SNOB AND...

AND YOU'D LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER! HOPE IT WORKS, BABY! BUT IF YOU ARE GOING TO SLING HASH... YOU'D BETTER LEARN HOW TO HOLD A TRAY!

UNTAMED LOVE

Two days passed with no sign of Bill! And then Sally found out about my plan, and took matters in her own hands!

OH, ELLA, LOOK! IT'S HIM! TH-- THAT'S HIS SISTER WITH HIM! I'M SO SCARED... SUPPOSE I SPILL SOMETHING, OR...

RELAX, BABY! YOU'LL DO FINE! AND THAT'S A RIGHT GUY... I'D STAKE A DAY'S TIPS ON IT! GOOD LUCK!



It seemed years since I'd seen Bill! He looked different, somehow, older... sadder! My voice trembled as I spoke...

MAY I TAKE YOUR ORDER -- BILL?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? AND DRESSED UP LIKE A WAITRESS? YOU BROUGHT ME HERE, SALLY! I GUESS YOU BOTH THINK IT'S A GOOD JOKE!



NO, IT WASN'T A JOKE, BILL! I WAS SILLY ENOUGH TO HOPE--

YOU HOPED I'D MAKE A FOOL OF MYSELF AND THINK THIS ACT WAS REAL? WELL, I'M NOT THAT DUMB! GO BACK TO YOUR FINISHING SCHOOL!

BILL, EVEN IF YOU ARE MY BROTHER, I HATE YOU!



DON'T, SALLY! FORGET THE--HELP!

WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING, CLUMSY!

MARSHA!



THAT'LL COME OUT OF YOUR PAY, BABE! YOUR LAST PAY! YOU'RE FIRED!

YOU MEAN SHE WAS REALLY WORKING-- HEY, WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE YELLING AT, ANYWAY? PIPE DOWN! OH, DARLING, ARE YOU HURT?



Back safe in Bill's arms, I knew nothing... not even my turned ankle... could *really* hurt again!

SWEETHEART, I'VE BEEN A STUBBORN FOOL! PLEASE, CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME? TO THINK I'VE MADE YOU ASSOCIATE WITH PEOPLE LIKE THIS!

I THINK SHE'S A DOPE, BUT OF COURSE SHE'LL FORGIVE YOU--IF YOU EVER STOP YAMMERING AND KISS HER!

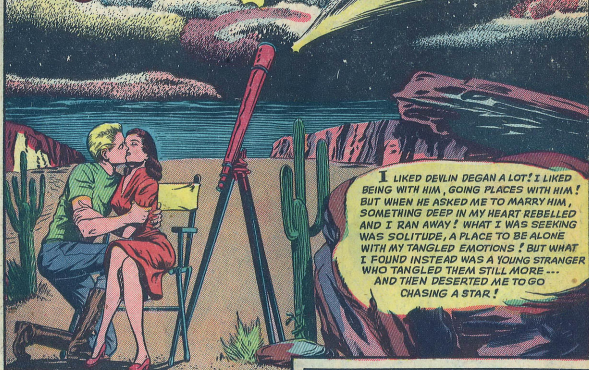


Bill forgot his anger at Ella and Joe as he kissed me! But it's a good thing he didn't have eyes in the back of his head!

SORRY I HAD TO TRIP YOU SO HARD, KID! BUT IT WAS IN A GOOD CAUSE! AND BESIDES, THE ROAD TO LOVE IS SUPPOSED TO BE BUMPY!



Star Chaser



IT WAS EASY FOR PLEASANT THINGS TO BECOME A HABIT...A SATURDAY NIGHT WITH DEV DEGAN---THE QUIET RIDE HOME---THE CASUAL GOOD-NIGHT KISS...

THANKS FOR A WONDERFUL EVENING, AS USUAL, DEV, BE SEEING YOU!

IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SO WONDERFUL WITHOUT YOU, LANA!



IT MIGHT HAVE GONE ON AND ON, BUT ONE SATURDAY NIGHT THE CASUAL KISS TURNED TO A TEMPEST!

I CAN'T STAND THIS ANY LONGER!





DEV, WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU? I DON'T PLAY THOSE GAMES, AS YOU WELL KNOW!

I'M NOT PLAYING, LANA! AND I CAN'T STAND PRETENDING ANY LONGER!



CAN'T YOU SEE THAT I'M CRAZY IN LOVE WITH YOU, LANA? I WANT YOU TO MARRY ME, MY DARLING! I CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS, BEING CASUAL!

DON'T, DEV! WAIT! I LIKE YOU A LOT BUT I--- I DON'T KNOW WHETHER I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU OR NOT! I CAN'T DECIDE!



SOMETIMES I THINK I'M IN LOVE AND THEN I WONDER! IF I WERE, DEV, I THINK I'D KNOW FOR CERTAIN! GIVE ME A LITTLE TIME!

THREE DAYS, DEAREST! THIS IS SATURDAY AND WE HAVE A DATE TUESDAY NIGHT! I'LL EXPECT AN ANSWER THEN--- ONE WAY OR ANOTHER!

DEV DIDN'T TRY TO KISS ME AGAIN AND THE ANGUISH IN HIS VOICE TORE MY HEART! I ALMOST SURRENDERED BLINDLY THEN, TO SPARE HIM!



EITHER WAY, LANA---KNOWING FOR SURE WILL BE BETTER THAN TORTURING MYSELF ENDLESSLY! GOOD NIGHT, DARLING!

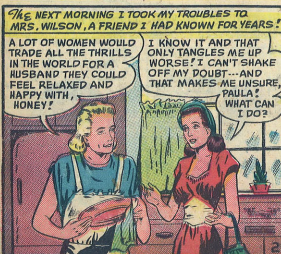
GOOD NIGHT, DEV! AND THANK YOU FOR BEING SO SWELL!



There WAS NO SLEEP FOR ME THAT NIGHT! NOW COULD I DECIDE IN THREE DAYS WHAT MONTHS OF WONDERING HAD LEFT UNSOLVED?



DEV IS NICE BUT HE DOESN'T STIR ME! LOVE SHOULD BE A HURRICANE OF EMOTIONS! ALL I FEEL WITH DEV IS RELAXED AND HAPPY!



THE NEXT MORNING I TOOK MY TROUBLES TO MRS. WILSON, A FRIEND I HAD KNOWN FOR YEARS!

A LOT OF WOMEN WOULD TRADE ALL THE THRILLS IN THE WORLD FOR A HUSBAND THEY COULD FEEL RELAXED AND HAPPY WITH, HONEY!

I KNOW IT AND THAT ONLY TANGLES ME UP WORSE! I CAN'T SHAKE OFF MY DOUBT---AND THAT MAKES ME UNSURE, PAULA! WHAT CAN I DO?



WHY NOT GO OUT TO DESERT HAVEN FOR A FEW DAYS? THERE'S NOTHING LIKE SOLITUDE TO HELP STRAIGHTEN OUT YOUR THINKING!

YOUR CAMP ON THE EDGE OF THE DESERT? THAT'S A WONDERFUL IDEA! TROUBLES ALWAYS SEEM TO MELT AWAY OUT THERE UNDER THE STARS!

UNTAMED LOVE

I PACKED CAMPING GEAR AND FOOD AT ONCE! DESERT HAVEN WAS AN OLD LINE CAMP THE WILSONS HAD FIXED UP FOR A WEEK-END SPOT!

IT WAS ALMOST SUNDOWN WHEN I GOT TO DESERT HAVEN! I'D BEEN THERE WITH THE WILSONS SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE!

I OPENED THE DOOR AND STARTED IN AND SUDDENLY ...

THIS WILL BE PERFECT! NOBODY EVER GOES OUT HERE! I'LL BE ALL ALONE TO THINK THINGS OUT AND GET STRAIGHT WITH MY HEART!

THIS IS IDEAL ... NOTHING BUT SOLITUDE, WITHOUT A HUMAN BEING FOR MILES! I'LL BE COMPLETELY ALONE ...

WELL, SHUT THE DOOR, DOPEY! WE DON'T WANT FLIES AND GNATS BOTHERING US ALL NIGHT! EEEK!

HUH? OH, FOR THE LOVE OF GOSH, WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

UH ... I COULD ASK YOU THE SAME!

MY VOICE WAS SHARP BUT INSIDE, MY HEART WAS GOING LIKE MAD. FOR THIS GRAY-EYED STRANGER HAD TOUCHED A DEEP SPRING OF EXCITEMENT!

IT HAPPENS I'M A FRIEND OF THE WILSONS WHO OWN DESERT HAVEN ... AND I'VE PERMISSION TO BE HERE FOR A FEW DAYS OF QUIET!

NOW THAT'S AN INTERESTING SITUATION, INDEED! I HAVE PERMISSION TO BE HERE FOR A FEW DAYS OF QUIET MYSELF!

I'M SCOTTY MORGAN ... PROFESSOR SCOTT MORGAN OF DANLER UNIVERSITY, TO BE FORMAL! MR. WILSON LET US USE THIS SPOT FOR STAR STUDY!

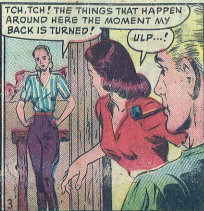
OH ... I'M LANA SHARP, PROFESSOR MORGAN! MRS. WILSON TOLD ME TO COME! I GUESS SHE DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT YOUR BEING HERE!

SCOTT MORGAN'S DEEP VOICE AND WARM SMILE SENT A TINGLE THROUGH MY NERVES ... A SENSATION I HAD NEVER KNOWN BEFORE! THEN ...

TCH, TCH! THE THINGS THAT HAPPEN AROUND HERE THE MOMENT MY BACK IS TURNED!

ULP ...!

OH, WHAT A CRUEL TRICK! THE FIRST MAN I EVER MET WHO MADE ME FEEL THIS WAY ... AND HE'S MARRIED!



Then Scott's words came like a shaft of sunlight to drive out the chill in my heart!

AUDREY, COME MEET LANA SHARP! LANA, THIS IS MY SISTER AUDREY! SHE'S KEEPING HOUSE FOR ME ON THIS EXPEDITION!

HELLO, LANA! WE MUST BE QUITE A SHOCK TO YOU, IF YOU CAME OUT LOOKING FOR SOLITUDE!



WE'LL MOVE OUT RIGHT AWAY! AFTER ALL, WE HAVE A TENT WE CAN PITCH OVER AROUND CANYON SPRINGS AND ...

OH, PLEASE DON'T! I... I WAS JUST STUNNED FOR A MOMENT! I CAN'T LET YOU INTERRUPT YOUR WORK JUST FOR ME!



SUDDENLY THE PURPOSE OF MY LONE TRIP SEEMED REMOTE AND UNIMPORTANT! ALL I WANTED WAS TO STAY NEAR SCOTT MORGAN!

WHY DON'T WE ALL STAY? YOU AND I CAN TAKE THE BEDROOM! SCOTT'S OUT ALL NIGHT CHASING STARS ANYHOW! HE USES THE BUNK!

IT SOUNDS PERFECT... IF I WOULDN'T BE IN YOUR WAY! I HAVE TO BE BACK ON TUESDAY ANYHOW!



SO IT WAS DECIDED! OUR DINNER WAS A GAY MEAL, FAR FROM THE BROODING LONELINESS I HAD ANTICIPATED! SCOTT AND AUDREY WERE FUN!



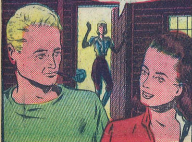
HOW ABOUT IT, LANA? CARE TO WALK OUT ON THE DESERT AND SEE THE JOB I'M HERE TO DO?

I'D LOVE TO! I'VE ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATED BY THE STARS OUT HERE! THEY SEEM BIGGER AND NEARER THAN ANYWHERE ELSE!



THAT'S WHY WE USE THIS SPOT FOR AN OBSERVATION POST! THE CLEAR AIR GIVES US BETTER VIEWING!

BETTER WATCH HIM, LANA! IF HE FORGETS STARS AND STARTS BABBLING ABOUT MOONLIGHT, RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!



MY HEART SANG WITH THE NIGHT BREEZE THAT STIRRED THE DESERT SANDS! NOW I KNEW I HAD BEEN RIGHT TO DOUBT MY LOVE FOR DEV...

THERE'S THE LOOKOUT POST, LANA! I'M CHARTING THE PATHS OF METEORITES... SHOOTING STARS! THEY GIVE A CLUE TO WANDERING METEOR SWARMS OUT IN SPACE!

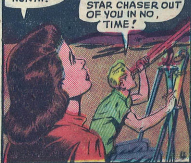
IT SOUNDS FASCINATING!



THERE WAS A FASCINATION IN SCOTT'S WORK... BUT I THINK I WOULD HAVE SHARED HIS ENTHUSIASM FOR ANYTHING!

THERE'S ONE! I'D GUESS IT HEADED ABOUT EIGHTY DEGREES NORTH!

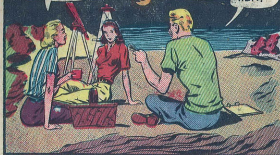
GOOD WORK, LANA! YOU HAVE AN EYE FOR THIS! I COULD MAKE A STAR CHASER OUT OF YOU IN NO TIME!



WHEN AUDREY BROUGHT A MIDNIGHT LUNCH, I COULD HARDLY BELIEVE IT WAS SO LATE! THE HOURS HAD FLED LIKE MOMENTS!

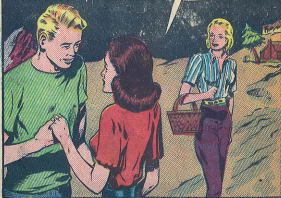
WHAT-A-MAN, MORGAN! ALONE ON THE DESERT WITH A BEAUTIFUL GIRL... AND ALL HE THINKS OF ARE STAR CHARTS!

DON'T KID YOURSELF, SIS! HALF THOSE CHARTS ARE THE STARS IN LANA'S EYES! SHE WATCHED THE SKY AND I WATCHED HER!



NOW RUN ALONG TO BED, LANA! I'LL SEE YOU IN THE MORNING!

GOOD NIGHT, SCOTT! AND THANKS FOR A WONDERFUL, WONDERFUL EVENING!

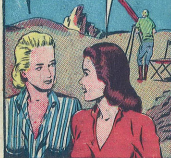


SERIOUSLY, LANA! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT BIG STAR-STRUCK BROTHER OF MINE?

I THINK HE'S MARVELOUS, AUDREY! I'VE NEVER KNOWN ANYONE LIKE HIM! IS--- IS THAT ALL RIGHT?

ALL RIGHT? I THINK IT'S PERFECT! HE'S DODGED ROMANCE SO LONG, I WAS GETTING WORRIED! BUT SOMETHING TELLS ME MY WORRIES ARE OVER!

DO YOU MEAN IT, AUDREY? DO YOU REALLY THINK HE'S INTERESTED?



As WE UNDRESSED, I TOLD AUDREY OF MY FLIGHT FROM DEV! IT WAS SO EASY TO TALK TO HER!

YOU MAKE THIS DEVLIN SOUND LIKE QUITE A GUY! BUT WITHOUT THAT CERTAIN SPARK, IT'S NOT COMPLETE!

HE'S AWFULLY NICE! THE ONLY CRACK IN MY HAPPINESS IS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE TO HURT HIM!



DON'T FRET, LANA! IT TAKES TWO TO LIGHT THAT FIRE---AND ONE OF THESE DAYS HE'LL FIND THE REAL ONE IN SOMEONE ELSE!

YOU'RE A GRAND PERSON, AUDREY! YOU MAKE IT ALL SOUND SIMPLE AND RIGHT! I'M GLAD I CAME OUT HERE!



WHAT IF I HADN'T COME? WHAT IF I HAD NEVER MET SCOTT? BUT I'VE MET HIM AND NOW I KNOW WHAT LOVE REALLY FEELS LIKE!



THE NEXT DAY SCOTT SLEPT LATE AND THEN WORKED ON HIS CALCULATIONS! BUT WITH EVENING, HE TOOK IT FOR GRANTED I WOULD JOIN HIM AGAIN!

THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENING IN MY LIFE, LANA! THAT'S WHY I'M STARTING A LITTLE EARLY!

ARE THERE SPECIAL METEORITES TO LOOK FOR TONIGHT, SCOTT?



NO! THIS IS THE EVENING WHEN A STODGY OLD UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR PROBABLY MAKES A PRIZE IDIOT OF HIMSELF IN A DIFFERENT FIELD!

I---I DON'T QUITE UNDER-
STAND!



THE FIELD OF LOVE, LANA! I NEVER BOTHERED WITH IT UNTIL I SAW YOU---AND NOW I'VE BEEN KNOCKED CLEAR OFF MY BASE! I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU!

OH, SCOTT---
SCOTT---I'M
GLAD!

IT HAPPENED
TO ME THE
MOMENT I
SAW YOU!

LANA, DEAREST!
I CAN'T BELIEVE
IT'S REALLY TRUE!



SCOTT BENT TO KISS ME---AND ABRUPTLY A BLINDING LIGHT BURST OVER US AND THE EARTH SHOOK TO A DEAFENING THUNDER! I WAS PARALYZED---

SCOTT---!

OH, MY
GOLLY!



BUT INSTEAD OF COMFORTING ME, SCOTT WHIRLED WITHOUT A WORD AND WENT RACING OFF!

SCOTT? SCOTT? DON'T LEAVE ME! WHAT IS IT?



SUDDENLY OTHER ARMS WERE AROUND ME, STRONG AND COMFORTING, AND I FOUND MYSELF STARING INTO A FAMILIAR FACE!



DEV! WHA---WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

LOOKING FOR YOU, MY DEAREST---AND IT LOOKS LIKE I GOT HERE IN THE NICK OF TIME! YOU'RE SHAKING LIKE A LEAF!



SOMETHING IMPORTANT CAME UP, DARLING! I MADE MRS. WILSON TELL ME WHERE YOU WERE AND DROVE RIGHT OUT! A GIRL SAID YOU WERE HERE! THAT WAS AUDREY MORGAN! HER BROTHER IS OBSERVING THE STARS FROM A POST OUT HERE, DEV!



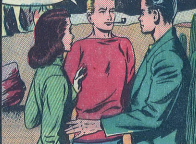
SUDDENLY--- OH, THERE YOU ARE, DEAREST! THAT METEORITE EXPLODING SO CLOSE MADE ME FORGET EVERYTHING BUT MY CHART! I'M SORRY---HEY! I THOUGHT IT WAS AUDREY WITH YOU!

UH---THIS IS DEV DEGAN, SCOTT! PROFESSOR SCOTT MORGAN, DEV!



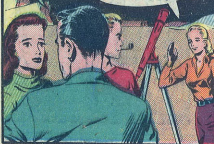
I COULD FEEL THE SWIFT FLASH OF HOSTILITY BETWEEN THEM! DEV HAD HEARD SCOTT CALL ME "DEAREST" AND SCOTT HAD SEEN DEV'S ARMS AROUND ME!

YES! MRS. WILSON SAID LANA CAME OUT HERE TO BE ALONE! NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US, MR. MORGAN---



DEV'S HAND ON MY ARM URGED ME AWAY! SUDDENLY I WAS CONFUSED AGAIN! SCOTT HAD ABANDONED ME WHEN I NEEDED COMFORT---AND DEV HAD BROUGHT IT!

COME ALONG, SWEETHEART! I HAVE EXCITING NEWS! HI, EVERYBODY! QUITE A LITTLE FIREWORKS DISPLAY SCOTT'S PETS PUT ON FOR US, WASN'T IT? COME ON BACK AND HAVE SOME COFFEE!



SCOTT MADE NO EFFORT TO TOUCH ME! SILENTLY HE WAITED FOR THE DECISION I HAD TO MAKE!

SCOTT, WHO STIRS ME-- OR DEV, WHO COMFORTS ME AND LOVES ME, TOO? OH, WHY MUST I MAKE A DECISION THAT HURTS ONE OF THEM?



I TAKE IT YOU'RE THE DEV DEGAN WE HEARD ABOUT! I DIDN'T GET MORE THAN A GLIMPSE OF YOU WHEN YOU RUSHED UP TO THE CABIN!

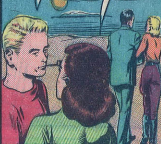
UH---I GUESS I WAS A LITTLE EXCITED! LANA SAYS YOU'RE AUDREY!



BEFORE I KNEW IT, AUDREY HAD SOOTHED THE ATMOSPHERE AND WAS CHATTERING GAILY WITH DEV, LEAVING SCOTT BESIDE ME---

AUDREY TOLD ME OF YOUR PROBLEM, LANA! I GUESS IT'S UP TO YOU NOW!

I DON'T KNOW, SCOTT! SUDDENLY I JUST DON'T KNOW!



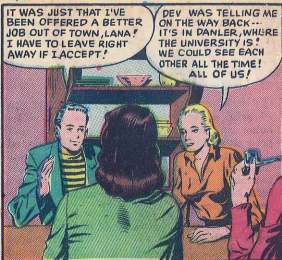
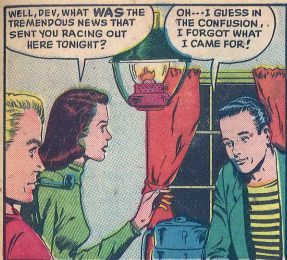
WE GOT INTO THE LIGHT AND I SAW DEV STARE AT AUDREY, REALLY SEEING HER FOR THE FIRST TIME CLEARLY!



DO YOU MEAN YOU JUST KEEP HOUSE FOR YOUR BROTHER WHILE HE RUNS AROUND CHARTING METEORITES?

SUMMERS, I DO, DEV! IN WINTER SCOTT TEACHES AT THE U AND I RUN THE LIBRARY!





And suddenly my eyes were opened and I knew my heart!



WILD DESIRE

THE water was cool under the shade of the great willow, held back by the rock riffles below and screened by the thick bushes that grew down to the edge of the pool. Julie poised on the rock like a pale goddess and then dived. She came up instantly, her wealth of dark hair swimming out from the pale beauty of her face, her body a blur of white under the darkening ripples.

She swam until she was tired and then, drawing herself up over the water-smoothed boulder at the edge, she shook herself like a dog and then slid into the faded house dress that hung on a bush. In the warm sun, her tanned body dried almost instantly and she lay back, relaxed and happy, humming a soft tune to the catbirds in the willow. She was like a bird herself, wild and untamed, a creature of the high mountain fastnesses. She had never seen a city bigger than Huggins Corners, nor did she particularly want to.

Suddenly a twig cracked in the bushes and she shot upright, her face hardening. "Come outa there, you peepin' buzzard," she spat angrily, and one brown hand groped behind her for a rock of convenient size. "Come out or get stoned out."

The bushes parted and the crimsoned, sheepish face of Jed Toller poked through. "Aw, now Julie," he said. "I never come to peek at you. You know I ain't a peeker. I heard the splashin' so I come and waited a while after you clumb out."

"Whatever you were waiting for," Julie flared, "it ain't here. So get along and mind your own affairs, Jed Toller. I'm plumb sick of fallin' over you every time I turn around. Beat it!"

Instead of leaving, the big neighbor boy climbed through the last screening bushes and squatted down a cautious six feet away, at the edge of the boulder. His eyes glowed with a deep fire and his face, losing its first blush, had gone strangely pale. "Now, Julie, is that what you really want me to do? You must know how I feel about you, honey. I can't eat and I can't sleep for thinkin' of you. I got to keep seein' you or go crazy."

"Then go crazy," Julie snapped. "I can see the wild light in your eyes and I'm having none of it. Now get! You heard me. Get clean out of my sight or I'll let you have this rock."

Jed Toller's face tightened. "I ain't gettin', Julie. Rock or no rock, I'm having this out with you. I guess how I feel about you ain't no secret. I ain't the first that's felt that way about a gal."

"You'd feel that way about any gal," Julie said harshly. "Only thing is, I'm the only gal around-about that ain't hitched. If there was another, you'd be follerin' her."

"Nope," Jed said stubbornly and suddenly he got to his feet. "Only girl I want to follow is you, and I'm tired of trailin' behind. Hurry up and throw that rock, 'cause I'm coming after you."

She threw it with all her force and only Jed's swiftness saved him from getting three or four pounds of broken granite square in the face. As it was he dodged and before Julie could catch up another rock, he was upon her.

Grunting and struggling, she fought against the fierce clutch of his arms. But she was helpless against his greater strength. No matter how hard she fought, he pinned her arms and forced her back and at last he had her trapped. The crook of his arm held her head rigid and his lips, burning and hungry, crushed themselves against hers.

Julie fought, but now she fought as much against her own hungry response as against his muscles. Try as she would, she could not keep herself from returning that kiss with all the fiery ardor of her wild loneliness.

For a moment Jed's arms relaxed and in that moment she tore free. She ran to the edge of the boulder and poised there, panting, furious. Jed lay on the rock, watching her, making no move to pursue her. After a moment he said, "Wouldn't have done that, Julie, but the travelin' preacher's coming Sunday. I figured it would be a good time to know, for certain, how I stood with you. Preacher'd be proud to do a wedding."

"Preacher?" Julie said sharply, and all the anger went out of her face. She came back and dropped down beside Jed, her eyes warm, her lips parted. "Why didn't you say that it was preacher-plans you had in mind, Jed? A wedding'd suit me just fine, too."

This time there was no struggle when she burrowed back into his eager arms.

How easy it is to take a wrong turn on the rocky road to love! How simple to take the glamour-filled, exciting path that thrills for the moment--only to find it is gaudy tinsel instead of the real thing! That's when a girl must choose--either to hope and wait for love to come again or to set out and seek what the goddess of love has hidden away!

This was the problem I had to face and solve when my impatient heart took me on...



The Wrong Road TO LOVE



MORNING, CUTIE! NOW ABOUT INFORMING THE BOSS THAT HIS NEWEST AND BEST TRUCK DRIVER IS REPORTING FOR DUTY!

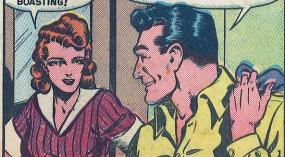


I was ripe for love that lush spring day when Steve Chatsworth strode into my life! Any girl would have looked twice at that husky, handsome giant with his laughing gray eyes, his infectious grin and impudent manner! I certainly was no exception!

I tried to conceal the wild fluttering of my heart under a veneer of severe formality--

PRETTY SURE OF YOURSELF, AREN'T YOU? I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW MY FATHER EXPECTS PEOPLE TO PROVE THEMSELVES BEFORE THEY GO ABOUT BOASTING!

I ALWAYS DID ADMIRE A GIRL WITH SPIRIT... ESPECIALLY IF SHE'S PRETTY! AND I PROMISE I WON'T HOLD IT AGAINST YOU JUST BECAUSE YOU HAPPEN TO BE THE BOSS'S DAUGHTER! I HAVE A FEELING WE'LL BE SEEING LOTS OF EACH OTHER!



We did see lots of each other and the more I saw of Steve Chatsworth, the deeper in love I fell with him! He seemed to share my feelings, but there was something about Steve... something restless and untamed... that kept me from feeling sure of him!



STEVE!
TAKE IT
EASY!
WE'RE NOT
GOING
ANYWHERE!

CAN'T HELP IT, JULIE!
I'VE GOT TO KEEP
MOVING! HATE TO
STAY IN ONE
PLACE TOO
LONG!

But just as suddenly, his mood would change, and he would become as gentle and charming as only Steve knew how to be!

YOU'RE A SWEET KID, JULIE! TOO GOOD FOR A GUY LIKE ME! I DON'T DESERVE YOU!

DON'T TALK
LIKE THAT, STEVE!
I DON'T WANT ANY-
ONE IN THE WORLD
BUT YOU!



STEVE! OH,
STEVE DARLING!
STAY WITH ME
ALWAYS!



lived for Steve's kiss! His strong arms around me and his lips pressed fiercely to mine made me deaf and blind to

I could feel my heart sinking as I anxiously watched Steve open the letter and quickly scan its contents! What would it mean to our love... to my life?



CONGRATULATE ME, JULIE! I'M ON MY WAY TO SOMETHING BIG AT LAST! MY OLD PAL, HANK BARSTOW IS OFFERING ME A PARTNERSHIP IN HIS SALMON FISHING BUSINESS IN POINT NEMO, ALASKA!

ALASKA? BUT, STEVE... THAT'S THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THE TRUCKING BUSINESS RIGHT HERE IN FAIRVIEW? YOU'RE DOING ALL RIGHT, AREN'T YOU?



DO YOU CALL 60 BUCKS A WEEK DOING ALL RIGHT? THERE'S A LOT OF MONEY IN SALMON, IF YOU PLAY IT SMART! BESIDES, I'M TIRED OF BEING BURIED IN THIS ONE-HORSE BURG!



W-WHEN ARE YOU GOING, STEVE?

RIGHT AWAY, OF COURSE! JUST AS SOON AS I PACK MY TOOTH BRUSH! DON'T LOOK SO GLUM, JULIE HONEY! THERE ARE PLENTY OF BOYS TO TAKE YOU OUT IN FAIRVIEW! YOU WON'T MISS ME!



Won't miss him? When every nerve, every fiber cries out with loneliness at the thought of being without him?

YOU'RE NOT GOING WITHOUT ME, STEVE! SOB; YOU-YOU'LL TAKE ME WITH YOU?



AN ALASKAN OUTPOST IS NO PLACE FOR A WOMAN, JULIE! BUT I'LL TELL YOU WHAT! WHEN THE BUSINESS GETS GOING, I'LL SEND FOR YOU! I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU WANT, IF ONLY YOU'LL STOP CRYING.

A-ALL RIGHT, STEVE-- I'LL BE GOOD!



THERE'S NOTHING ELSE TO DO! THEY'D NEVER CONSENT TO MY GOING!



I didn't have plane fare, so I chose the cheapest route, and the longest! It was weeks later when I finally docked at Point Nemo!

THIS CAN'T BE IT! WHY IT'S NOTHING BUT A COUPLE OF UNPAINTED SHACKS!



WHAT'D YOU EXPECT, MISS, THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING? POINT NEMO'S JUST A HUNTING AND FISHING OUTPOST!



I CAN'T STAND THIS ANY LONGER! WHAT IF SOMETHING DREADFUL HAS HAPPENED TO HIM? WHAT IF HE'S BEEN HURT... DROWNED?

GOT HERE JUST IN TIME, MISS! WON'T BE LONG AFORE THIS'LL BE FROZEN SOLID, AND NO BOAT'LL GET IN OR OUT TILL THE THAW COMES! WHO'RE YUH VISITIN'?

STEVE CHATSWORTH! DO YOU KNOW HIM?



SURE! MY DAUGHTER, BECKY! I'LL SHOW YUH WHERE STEVE LIVES! HE DIDN'T SAY NOTHING ABOUT EXPECTIN' NO WOMAN, THOUGH!

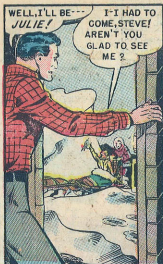


All at once, the enormity of what I had done swept over me like a tidal wave! I had left everything... parents, home, job... to come to this stark, desolate land! To a man who perhaps didn't even want me! I looked up at Becky! There was something about her set chin that showed her dislike! But I wasn't prepared for the blazing fury of her eyes as she suddenly faced me!

YOU LEAVE HIM ALONE... YOU HEAR? STEVE-- HE BELONGS TO BECKY!



UNTAMED LOVE



WELL, I'LL BE---
JULIE!

I-I HAD TO
COME, STEVE!
AREN'T YOU
GLAD TO SEE
ME?



THIS IS HARDLY
THE SEASON TO ENTERTAIN
OUTDOORS! INVITE
THE YOUNG LADY IN,
STEVE!

ALL RIGHT!
COME ON
IN!



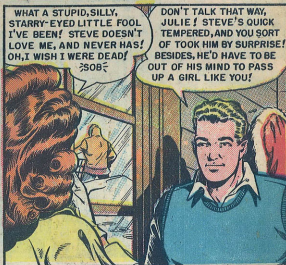
YOU TAKE
OTHER
WOMAN?
I'LL KILL
HER!

GO HOME, BECKY!
AND DON'T YOU
DARE COME HERE
AGAIN!
UNDERSTAND?



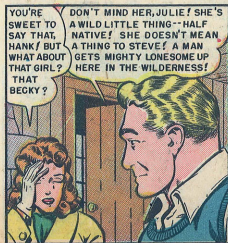
I'M SORRY, STEVE! I SEE
I'VE MADE A
MISTAKE! I'LL
TAKE THE NEXT
BOAT HOME!

THERE WON'T BE A BOAT
TILL SPRING, SO YOU MIGHT
AS WELL MAKE YOURSELF
COMFORTABLE! YOU CAN
HAVE THE BEDROOM--STEVE
AND I WILL BUNK IN
HERE!



WHAT A STUPID, SILLY,
STARRY-EYED LITTLE FOOL
I'VE BEEN! STEVE DOESN'T
LOVE ME, AND NEVER HAS!
OH, I WISH I WERE DEAD!

DON'T TALK THAT WAY,
JULIE! STEVE'S QUICK
TEMPERED, AND YOU SORT
OF TOOK HIM BY SURPRISE!
BESIDES, HE'D HAVE TO BE
OUT OF HIS MIND TO PASS
UP A GIRL LIKE YOU!



YOU'RE
SWEET TO
SAY THAT,
HANK! BUT
WHAT ABOUT
THAT GIRL?
THAT
BECKY?

DON'T MIND HER, JULIE! SHE'S
A WILD LITTLE THING--HALF
NATIVE! SHE DOESN'T MEAN
A THING TO STEVE! A MAN
GETS MIGHTY LONESOME UP
HERE IN THE WILDERNESS!

Hank gave me
new hope! I'd
make Steve
love me again!
By the time
Spring rolled
around he'd be
glad I had come!
Oh, yes, every-
thing would be
all right!



THIS PLACE IS A MESS! I'LL
GET IT CLEAN AND TIDY IN NO
TIME! AND THEN I'LL COOK
US A GOOD,
HOT
DINNER!

THAT'S THE SPIRIT!
I DON'T KNOW HOW
STEVE FEELS, BUT
I'M MIGHTY PLEASED
YOU'RE HERE,
JULIE!

In the weeks that followed, I did everything I could to transform the dingy shack into a real home! I was pleased to see that Hank was enjoying every minute of it, and even Steve had lost some of his sullenness! I felt almost happy...as if this peaceful life were just right for me!



IT SURE TAKES A WOMAN'S TOUCH TO CHANGE A SHACK INTO A REAL HOME!

I'M GLAD YOU LIKE IT, HANK! I LOVED DOING IT--ESPECIALLY MAKING THE CURTAINS OUT OF THOSE OLD FLOUR SACKS.

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT OUT, JULIE! DROP THAT EVER-LASTING MENDING AND COME ON OUT FOR A WALK!

I'D LOVE TO, HANK!

YOU TWO MIND IF I COME ALONG? COULD USE A LITTLE AIR MYSELF!



IT'S SO STILL AND PEACEFUL HERE! I WISH IT WOULD STAY LIKE THIS FOREVER!

NOT I! I CAN'T WAIT UNTIL THE SALMON ARE RUNNING AND WE CAN GET GOING! I HATE THIS SITTING AROUND!

Suddenly, without warning, my feet slipped out from under me! I clutched wildly at the thin air in an effort to save myself!



TAKE IT EASY, JULIE! YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!

THANKS, HANK! I-I MUST HAVE FALLEN INTO A HOLE!



It was the only thing I could think of to say! I was afraid my voice would betray the sudden pounding of my heart as Hank lifted me in his arms! I wanted to stay in that warm, protecting circle! It seemed as if that was where I belonged! Then--

PUT HER DOWN, HANK! YOU DON'T HAVE TO HOLD ON TO HER ALL NIGHT!

HE'S JEALOUS! HE MUST CARE-- A LITTLE! I DON'T KNOW IF I'M GLAD OR SORRY! I'M ALL MIXED UP!



The months flew by on snowy wings! It was warmer, now! The air had a certain softness—almost a whisper of longing that told me Spring was not far off! I tried not to remember that with the first thaw would come the steamer that would take me and all my hopes out of Steve's life! And Hank! I realized with a start that I had grown fond of him...fonder than I wanted to admit!

The boys were getting ready for their salmon run... mending nets,fixing up their sloop---

OLD DAN TOLD ME THERE'S GOING TO BE A DANCE TONIGHT OVER AT THE MINTON SETTLEMENT! WHAT SAY WE SHOW 'EM HOW THEY CUT A RUG IN THE STATES, JULIE?

OH, WONDERFUL, STEVE! HOPE I STILL REMEMBER HOW! WHAT ABOUT YOU, HANK?

YOU CAN COUNT ME IN, JULIE!



It wasn't much of a dance—but it was so long since I had known any gaiety that I forgot everything else in the joy of the moment. Hank surprised me by being a very good dancer!

HAVING A GOOD TIME, JULIE?

BETTER THAN THAT! I'M HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME, HANK!



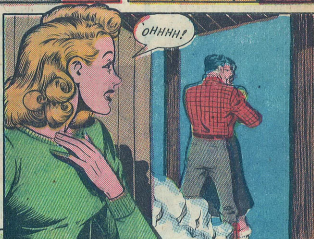
Suddenly my fool's paradise was shattered,for when I turned,I saw Steve slipping out the side door with Becky---

I-I DON'T THINK I WANT TO DANCE ANYMORE, HANK!

ALL RIGHT, JULIE! YOU SIT DOWN HERE, AND I'LL BRING YOU SOME COFFEE!



OH!!!



YOU LEAVE MY STEVE ALONE! HE BELONG TO BECKY! YOU STEAL MY MAN--I KILL!

YOU LITTLE FOOL! PUT DOWN THAT KNIFE!

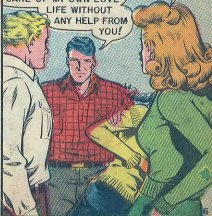


SORRY, BECKY-- BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO LEARN TO CURB YOUR TEMPER!



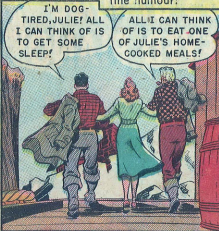
I'LL THANK YOU TO LEAVE MY WOMEN ALONE, BARSTOW! I CAN TAKE CARE OF MY OWN LOVE LIFE WITHOUT ANY HELP FROM YOU!

STEVE! HOW COULD YOU?



Somehow that horrible evening came to an end! It showed me a new side of Steve... a side I wasn't sure I liked! Hank was wonderful! He never lost control, and saw that Becky was returned safely to her father before the three of us rode silently home! The next day the salmon started running, and everything else was forgotten! I did all I could to help, and gave a sigh of relief when at last they were off!

It was a lonely yet exciting time for me until Hank and Steve finally came back from their last trip! It had been a good season, and they were both in fine humour!



All through the meal Hank was jubilant, making plans to invest their profits in better equipment for their business! Steve was strangely silent!

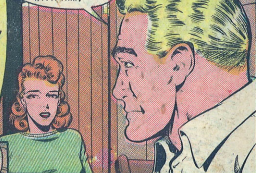


That night I went to sleep with a heavy heart! But sleep could not drive out my troubled thoughts, as I tossed and turned in a tumult of despair!



The minute I saw Hank the next morning I knew something had happened! With a leaden heart I listened to what he had to say--

HE'S RUN OUT ON US, JULIE! TAKEN ALL THE MONEY AND GONE-- HEAVEN KNOWS WHERE! DIDN'T EVEN LEAVE A NOTE! OLD DAN WAS HERE AND TOLD ME HE TOOK BECKY WITH HIM!



As I thought back, I wasn't surprised! Steve had acted according to form! He didn't love me! He didn't care about Hank! He cared about no one but Steve Chatsworth! But the wonder of it all was the way I felt! Free! As if a great weight had been lifted from my pinioned heart!

DON'T GO, JULIE! I COULDN'T BEAR TO BE WITHOUT YOU! I LOVE YOU, JULIE! I WANT YOU TO MARRY ME!



With a glad cry I was in Hank's arms! I knew then that I loved Hank... had loved him since the very first day I saw him! I thanked my lucky stars that things had worked out as they had!

I LOVE YOU TOO, DARLING! WITH ALL MY HEART AND SOUL! WE'LL START ALL OVER AGAIN! AND THIS TIME WE'LL BUILD ON A SOLID FOUNDATION! WE REALLY HAVE TO THANK STEVE! IF IT WEREN'T FOR HIM, I NEVER WOULD HAVE FOUND YOU!



WELL, I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING LEFT FOR ME BUT TO GO HOME! THERE'S A BOAT LEAVING TOMORROW!



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